Research Design and Methods in Political Science

Time: 10-18 October 2022

Place: Maria Curie-Skłodowska University, Lublin

Teacher: Stefano Guzzini
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Purpose and content of this course

How do we set up our research? This course provides an introduction into the different methodological traditions in the social sciences and gives some first overview over various qualitative research designs. In the second

the methodological background for understanding the different ways we do research in IR. It is based upon the idea that whenever we do research, we engage with, and sometimes also develop, theory. There is no theory-free analysis; and if it appears so, it is only because the analyst is unaware of it. For this reason, a first section of the course investigates the different types of theories and theorizing. In particular, it addresses the two major dividing lines by which we distinguish our (explanatory) theories: naturalism / interpretivism and agency / structure.

A second section introduces into research design and uses examples to illustrate different designs. All of them have a theoretical component. But in a first session, we will look at those whose means of analysis is theoretical in the first place to reach a theoretical aim. The other two sessions show different ways in which more positivist and more interpretivist connect empirical analysis with theory development.

Evaluation

1. Participation, 30%

One criterion for evaluation is your active attendance and constructive participation in the course, including in small group work. To enable you to participate constructively, you should have completed the relevant assigned course readings.

2. Take-Home exam, 70%

In the last meeting you will receive the take-home exam. It consists in writing a research design and should be between 3,000 and 5,000 words long (not counting references or footnotes). The take-home exam has to be handed in via e-mail to sgu@diis.dk as an attachment in Word. The deadline is …. . You will receive the exam back with individual comments.

Course schedule

10 October, 9.30-11: Introduction
11 October, 9.30-11.45: Philosophies of Science: Naturalism and Interpretivism
12 October, 9.30-11.45: Research Design: The 'what', 'why' and 'how' – Developing a Research Puzzle and/or Question
14 October, 9.30-11.45: Theoretical theses (constitutive theorizing): Conceptual critique, critical portraits, and problematising assumptions
17 October, 9.30-11: Empirical theses with theory development (1): Empirical generalization – Hypothesis-testing
18 October, 9.20-11: Empirical theses with theory development (2): Case studies and ideal types

Important!
Before the start of each part, you are asked to *already have read all* the readings of that week, because there will be almost no time to do so once the segment of the course starts.

Seminars

Monday, October 10th, 9:30 – 11:00
Introduction to the course:
getting to know each other and everybody's goals and interests

Tuesday, October 11th, 9:30 – 11:45
Philosophies of Science: Naturalism and Interpretivism
Readings:
Moses, Jonathon W. & Torbjørn L. Knutsen. 2007 (or later editions). *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research*. Houndmills: Palgrave.

Wednesday, October 12th, 9:30 – 11:45
Research Design
The 'what', 'why' and 'how': Developing a Research Puzzle and/or Question
Readings:

Guzzini, Stefano. 2021. 'Some Basics on (mainly qualitative) research design'. Mimeo, 13 pp. DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.4294740.

Gerring, John. 2012. *Social Science Methodology: A unified framework*, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, chapter 5 (concepts).

Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine and Dvora Yanow. 2012. *Interpretive Research Design*. New York, Abingdon: Routledge, chapters 1 and 2: 15-44.

Friday, October 14th, 9:30 – 11:45
Theoretical theses (constitutive theorizing):
Conceptual critique, critical portraits, and problematising assumptions
Readings:

Claude, Inis L., Jr. (1989) 'The balance of power revisited', *Review of International Studies* 15(2): 77-85.

Sárváry, Katalin. 2008. 'Democracy and International Relations: The Theory of István Bibó (1911–1979).' *Journal of International Relations and Development* 11 (4): 385-414.

Sjoberg, Laura. 2012. 'Gender, Structure, and War: What Waltz Couldn't See.' *International Theory* 4 (1): 1-38.

Monday, October 17th, 9:00 – 11:00
Empirical theses with theory development (1):
Empirical generalization – Hypothesis-testing

Forsberg, Tuomas (1999) 'Power, Interest and Trust: Explaining Gorbachev's Choices at the End of the Cold War', *Review of International Studies* 25(4): 603-21.

Barnett, Jon and W. Neil Adger (2007) 'Climate change, human security and violent conflict', *Political Geography* 26(6): 639-55.

Tuesday, October 18th, 9:00 – 11:00
Empirical thesis with theory development (2):
Case-studies and ideal types

Grech-Madin, Charlotte (2021) 'Water and Warfare: The Evolution and Operation of the Water Taboo', *International Security* 45(4): 84-125.

Müller, Thomas and Mathias Albert (2021) 'Whose balance? A constructivist approach to balance of power politics', *European Journal of International Security* 6(1): 109-28.

Take-home exercise on research design (group-work)